2021 IN REVIEW

Uplifting Alabama in a pandemic

The Alabama Humanities Alliance believes the humanities have the power to bring Alabamians together and help us see each other as fully human. That idea — and our work — grew in importance in 2021, when AHA programs provided crucial connections in communities separated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

GRANTS

AHA is the primary source of grants for public humanities projects statewide. We offer monthly Mini Grants (up to $2,500), quarterly Major Grants (up to $10,000), and annual Media Grants (up to $15,000). In 2021, we provided an additional round of pandemic recovery funding to cultural nonprofits and community cornerstones across the state. All AHA grants are funded with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. See pages 40-44 for descriptions of projects funded in 2021.
PROGRAMS

AHA’s public programming overcame pandemic challenges by pivoting to virtual when necessary and engaging in person when possible. All programs address the specific needs of Alabama communities while celebrating our shared cultures.

12 Why It Matters programs/podcast episodes
Our series on civic participation featured scholars who spoke about Black Alabamians’ insistence on full engagement in the electoral process.

7 SUPER Teacher workshops
We covered topics ranging from civil rights to Alabama waterways to help inspire teachers and increase their knowledge. The no-cost workshops included stipends and continuing education credits.

6 Road Scholar presentations
Our scholar-storytellers hit the road — or the screen — to enlighten and entertain at libraries, museums, community centers, and more.

5 cities host Water/Ways Smithsonian exhibit
Our Museum on Main Street program enables Alabamians to experience Smithsonian exhibits in their hometowns. In 2021-2022, Water/Ways toured Danville, Guntersville, Bessemer, Camden, and Elba.

3 books and reading programs
Initiatives included a Humanities and Healthcare virtual book discussion with Alabama Hospital Association and UAB representatives, a Prison Education correspondence course in reading and writing, and a virtual Prime Time Family Reading program.

1 Alabama History Day contest
Our state contest for National History Day, a competition that engages students (grades 6-12) in creative historical research, advanced 19 winners to the national level.

1 “Reflect, Alabama” panel discussion
This virtual event, part of a conversation series created by AHA’s Young Professionals Board, explored what Alabamians have learned about themselves and their communities during the pandemic.

1 “Telling Our Stories: Rural Alabama Communities and Journalism” event
Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Maura Casey headlined this conversation in our Democracy and the Informed Citizen program, which promotes rural civic engagement.

36 TOTAL PUBLIC PROGRAMS IN 2021
Thousands of Alabamians engaged statewide

IMPACT ADDS UP
Combining the totals from 2020 and 2021 offers a snapshot of AHA’s economic and cultural contributions to Alabama over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

$1.7M in total grant funding
10,000+ public programming participants
559 jobs preserved or created statewide through COVID-19 recovery funding
202 project scholars engaged in the humanities
151 public events statewide (virtual and in person)